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[Handwritten initials]

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7 July 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Central Intelligence
Deputy Director for Science and Technology
Director of Reconnaissance

SUBJECT: The NRP

1. As our meeting with the DCI on the subject of the NRO ended in some slight confusion, it seemed to me it might be helpful to record what is at least my impression of what we decided to do. Attached is a memorandum for the record for this purpose. It would not surprise me to be told that this impression is quite inaccurate.

2. In connection with the general problem of planning and programming in the NRO, you will remember that I talked at one point to Al Flax about measures to improve arrangements for joint planning for NRP activities. My objective was to establish some sort of flexible and reasonably informal framework within which the DNRO or his senior representatives could be kept abreast of substantive intelligence needs and requirements, and representatives of the intelligence community, familiar with these needs, could be kept abreast of technical potentialities and developments. Part of the objective would be to ensure that appropriate levels of the NRO and the intelligence community are kept informed of the status of any technical or substantive studies which are undertaken in the context of the NRP. The group which I had in mind would be responsible for monitoring existing studies but also for seeing that appropriate studies or examinations are initiated if there appears to be some need for them.

3. I am attaching copies of the draft proposed correspondence between Flax and the DCI which were designed to accomplish the purposes which I have suggested above. It may be worthwhile to give this proposal further consideration at this time. During our last conversation on the subject, it was thought that a useful planning group of the

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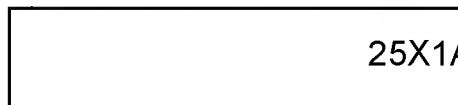
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NRO review(s)

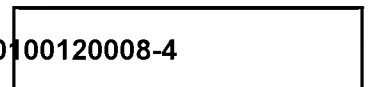
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character suggested by Dr. Flax would be better constituted if it included, instead of USIB committee representatives, somebody like [redacted] from NSA, possibly Dr. Proctor from CIA, and conceivably General Taylor from NIPE. Some appropriate representatives of S&T, DIA and General Berg would seem necessary to round out the representation.

/s/ John A. Bross

JOHN A. BROSS
D/DCI/NIPE

Attachments

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(S) NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE

WASHINGTON, D.C.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

Dear Dick,

I believe you share my feeling that over the last year or so the NRO and the USIB have made considerable progress in developing an effective interface and improved communication. It has occurred to me however that perhaps this could be strengthened further, particularly as we look ahead toward the problems of the future, if we could jointly establish a group to identify and study planning problems of mutual interest. After discussions with John Bross, I attempted to outline terms of reference for such a group, considering those functions that might be useful to the Board, the NRO, and the NRP Executive Committee. I would appreciate it if you would examine these terms of reference and give me your reaction.

Such a planning group as I have in mind, I would suggest, should be chaired by my Deputy and the other principal partners should be the Chairman, COMOR and the Chairman of the SIGINT Committee with such technical support as they determine necessary to conduct their business. It might be useful if you appointed a representative of Mr. Bross's office to participate as a consultant or observer because of John's responsibility to you for overview of the intelligence activities of the Government.

If you think well of this proposal, a letter from you agreeing, it would seem to me, is all that would be required for us to proceed.

**DD/S&T
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Sincerely,

Alexander H. Flax

The Honorable Richard Helms
Director of Central Intelligence
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D. C.

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Terms of Reference
for the
Coordinating Group for Reconnaissance Planning

- a. To effect the coordination and exchange of information between the USIB and its constituent organizations and the NRO and its constituent organizations, as necessary to assure joint planning and action on emerging overhead reconnaissance problems of the NRP, which involve closely related consideration of the R&D, operations, and requirements.
- b. To identify and make available, on request, for planning studies initiated by the USIB or the NRO, competent and authoritative representation from collection, exploitation, or requirements organizations, as appropriate.
- c. To periodically review the status of major planning activity in the area of overhead reconnaissance under way in the NRO and the USIB, and their constituent organizations, and to advise the organization responsible for the study on the adequacy of the scope, the desirability of additional participation or the need for consideration of additional planning factors.
- d. To recommend to the NRO or the USIB the initiation of studies necessary to meet the overall planning needs of the intelligence community in the area of overhead reconnaissance.

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May 12, 1967

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Dear Al,

I have examined your letter on the Coordination Group for Reconnaissance Planning and the Terms of Reference. I do agree that such a group offers the prospect of improving the interface with the USIB. There has been an increased flow of communication between the NRO and the Board in the last year or so and I think this new activity should strengthen our relationship.

The membership you suggest for this group seems adequate with the proviso that any ^{intell} Agency should be responsive to a request for assistance.

I do want to say that a problem of great concern, particularly in the area of reconnaissance, is requirements. It seems to me that because of our formal machinery we tend on occasion to define requirements so rigidly that the costs of meeting those requirements are disproportionate to the importance of achieving the totality of the requirement. Accordingly, I hope that one of the important effects of the work of such a group would be to find ways to apprise the Board of the options which might be available, some of which would not be as complete in producing results but would

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be materially less expensive. The margin of loss in certain cases might not be as critical as was first expected.

I propose to make available copies of our correspondence to the USIB for its information. Please be in touch with the chairmen of the COMOR and SIGINT Committee, whom I am requesting to represent the Board, whenever you are ready to proceed with the Coordination Group for Reconnaissance Planning.

Sincerely,

Richard Helms

The Honorable Alexander H. Flax
Director, National Reconnaissance Office
Department of Defense
Washington, D. C.

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